

THE RECORDS
OF
CHRIST

To the
Believing Christian

Mainly and Especially for the
Edification and Comfort of all
sin, and Lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ,

IN A
SERMON

On 1 Pet. 2. 7.

By *William Walker*, B.D.

LONDON: Printed by Anne Maxwell
for Joseph Clark, 1867.

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To the deservedly much Honoured
 Christian Lady, the Lady *Esther Gooderick*,
 The Vertuous and Religious Wife of the
 truly Noble and Christian Knight, Sir
Francis Gooderick, of *Manby* in the
 County of *Lincoln*, Chancellour
 of the County *Palatine* of *Du-*
risme; and a Member of the
 Commons House of
 Parliament.

W. W. Wissheth all the present and fu-
 ture happiness of Earth and Heaven, of
 Grace and Glory.

M A D A M,

Y Our Ladyships long-continued favors to me and
 mine, do exact of me by way of just retribution,
 some monument of my Obligations to your La-
 dyship. Here therefore according to my small a-
 bilities do I erect a little Pillar of Gratitude
 unto your name (a Name to which I am sure Christ is
 precious, a Name which I assure my self is precious unto
 Christ) Dedicating unto it this short discourse of the pre-
 ciousness of Christ. Which Monument though little,
 yet I hope may be lasting, because that so long as there
 shall be believing souls in the world, which I persuade
 my self will be as long as the world shall last, (for all the
 Apostatizing of this last and worst age of the world, so
 much as it doth from the Faith of Christ) so long there
 will be souls in the world unto whom Christ Jesus will

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be precious. And with those to whom Christ himself is precious, any discovery, any discourse of the preciousness of Christ will be sure to be in some esteem; and so this, I hope, among the rest; both because the subject of it is sweet, and because the discourse thereon is short, as rather giving brief Hints to it, than being any full handling of it. And to this pass the world is grown, that even amongst some that are good, that which is good is the better liked, if there be but little of it. I shall not here put your Ladyship so much to the blush, though I should thereby add a yet more lively tincture of Grace to those lovely features which you have from nature, and which you keep too as you had them from nature, neither spotted, nor stained with adventitious complexion, (a rare thing in these Hypocritical days of ours, when it is in the fashion forsooth, under one hood to carry two faces, one of Gods making, and another of our own) I say, I shall not here put your Ladyship so much to the blush, as to launch forth into any large discourse of your many and excellent virtues and graces; that were the way to bring Envy instead of honour upon you, and to expose my self to be accused for Flattery, whilst I speak but the Truth. For so is the world now, that anothers Goodness is our Envy, and their Commendation for it, our Accusation for the want of it; and what we have not of it our selves, must needs be flattery if ascribed to any other: Else if the curious carping folks, that can espie a single hair where it chanceth to lie awrie on a Ladies forehead, would look off a while. I could discourse of your great Affection and Loyalty to your Husband; a thing which is grown to be a very considerable commendation now a dayes, in as much as through the like animosity betwixt Husband and Wife, to that which was of old betwixt Cæsar and Pompei, whereof the one would bear no equal, and the other could brook no superiour; some scarce Lords, are

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enforced to keep Houses like Kings, that is two a piece, one for themselves, and another for their wives. I could discourse also of your prudent Ordering of your Family in that Christian way, that if St. Paul himself were on Earth, and were to write a Letter to you, as once St. John did to an Elect Lady, he would undoubtedly not let it go without a salutation to the Church which is in your House. I could discourse of your Love to the Ordinances of Christ, and of your constancy in attending on them, and of your Reverence and Devotion during that attendance; which also is no small commendation in this irreligious age, wherein Gods Publike Service, anciently the Saints delight, is become the Peoples Publick grievance; so that few have any affection for it, many absent themselves wholly from it, and of those that afford their presence at it, how many be there, of whom the Lord may justly say, what once of old he said of the Jews, This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, *Isa.* 29. 13. Much after the rate of their carriage at a Play-house is the carriage of themselves at the House of God, save that they give not half that heed to the Preaching of the Word, which they give to the Acting of the Play. To look about them, and spie marvels; to see fashions and studying faces, this is, (is it not) the main business that many mind whilst they are at Church, forgetting in the mean time where they are, and what they are about, and in whose presence they are about it. I could discourse also of your zeal and care to bring others to the Ordinances, as well as to come to them your self. O how comely is the sight of your Ladyship marching together with your Husband in the Head of your following Family to the House of God! Which is so much the more commendable in you, in regard of the great neglect in this Point, which too many great ones

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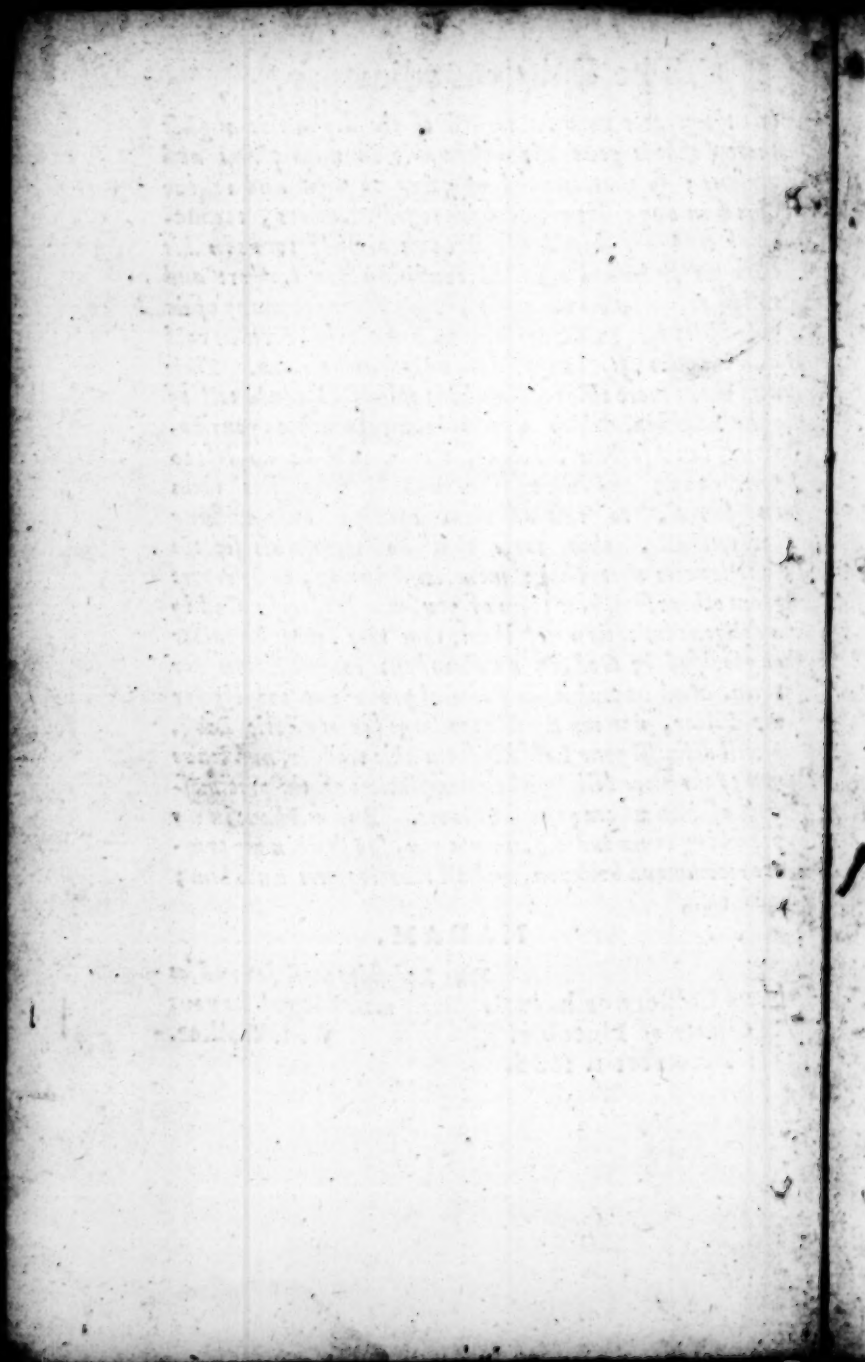
ones are guilty of, who quite contrary to the temper of Joshua (whose resolution was, that though all Israel beside should go away from, and forsake God, yet he and his house would serve the Lord,) are neither for serving the Lord themselves, nor for having so much as their house to serve him; but to the great discountenancing of the Ministers of God, and to the great discouraging of Godliness it self, the nearer they are in respect of dwelling to the Church, the farther in respect of devotion they are from God. I could further tell what a precious esteem you have of the Ministers of Christ, and that for their Work sake: (Large is that share of respect which I my self have received from you, even but for my relation that I have to that work, though far short from being any workman at it.) And this also is by much the more commendable, in regard the Atheisme and Infidelity of this age is grown to that height, that those Embassadors of Christ, and for Christ, whose business is the negotiating of that great work of Reconciliation betwixt God and man, whom the Primitive Saints would have pluckt their eyes out for, and have given entertainment unto, even as unto Jesus Christ, are made amongst Christians, what the Apostles were amongst Jews and Pagans, as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things: Fellows, whom some account as unfit to live, as the Jews did our Saviour; to whom it would be the greatest pleasure in the world, to have the power & opportunity of serving those servants of the high God, as Hanun the Ammonite did the servants of King David, 1 Sam. 10. 4. or putting any other, as ill, or worse indignity upon them. I could tell also of your tender Care for any poor afflicted Member of Jesus Christ, that comes under your notice, relieving them both spiritually and corporally, as their wants are; which is not at any time the least commendation of a Christian Lady, but

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but the greater now in regard of the deplorable neglect thereof that is generally observable in most places and persons; so that instead of going to visit and relieve Christ in any of his afflicted distressed Members, too many of us I fear should Christ come himself to us in his own person in any afflicted condition for comfort and relief to him in his distresses, I say I fear too many of us would let him go away from us unrelieved, even as cold and comfortless, hungry and naked as he came. These and many more things, (excellent things) I could tell of your Ladyship, which would be very much to your honour, but I forbear, because they would be no less to your envy; and leave them to God, who sees them in secret, to reward them openly; only wishing herewithall, that those that do themselves see the excellencies that I have mentioned in you, or by report from others shall hear them of you, may so glorifie God by a diligent imitation of them, that they may hereafter be glorified by God, in an abundant compensation for them. And now that my Pedestal prove not too big for my Pillar, nor my Epistle too large for my little Book, I will dismisse your Ladyship from this trouble, and leave you to the more delightful contemplation of the preciousness of him whom your soul loves. And as I have in my preaching commended him unto you, so I shall in my prayers recommend both you, and all that is yours unto him; and rest,

MADAM,

From Colsterworth, in the County of Lincolne, Decmeber 1. 1666.	Tour Ladyships most devoted, as most Obliged servant Will. Walker.
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The Preciousness of Christ to the Believing-Christian.

1 Pet. 2. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe, he is Precious.*

THE Apostle having in the third verse of this Chapter, proposed the graciousness of the Lord, (appearing in those precious sweets, and rich advantages designed unto Believers by the Gospel) as an Argument to move these Christians, to whom he writes this Epistle, to reject those Heretical Gnostick Doctrines, whereby the deceivers of those times went about to infuse into the minds of men, villany, deceitfulness and hypocrisie, maliciousness and reproachfulness (which he exhorts them to in the first verse)-----and with the sincere and earnest desire of *new-born Babes*, to suck and drink in the pure *Milk of the Word*, that sound and wholesome Christian Doctrine, which by the Orthodox Teachers of the Gospel was afforded to them, as being the meanes whereby they should grow in grace unto glory, (which he exhorts them unto in verse the second) he goeth on in verse the fourth and fifth, to exhort them to come and conjoin themselves unto Christ, and build themselves upon

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him, as living stones, on a living foundation, and to become both a spiritual House, and an holy Priest-hood, (both Temple and Priests) to offer up spiritual Sacrifices (prayers and praises) unto God; proposing as an argument thereunto, the acceptableness thereof unto God through Jesus Christ; and that confirmed by a Text of Scripture, verse the sixth; *Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect and precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.* Which is, as if he had said, The Lord Jesus Christ is so sure and steady, so choice and precious a foundation-stone to whatsoever is built on him, that he that buildeth on him shall never have cause to repent of, or be ashamed of his building, as they are used to be, who having built on an ill foundation, live to see their buildings buried in their own ruines. What is built on Christ will abide, what is offered unto God by him, will be accepted. Now Christ being this to the Believing soul, it rationally follows, that such an elect foundation-stone as he is, should be very highly esteemed by it, and be very dear and precious unto it. And accordingly it follows in the words of my Text, *unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.*

In which words are set forth unto us two things.

The First is, what Persons they are unto whom Christ is precious; and they are Believers. *ἡμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν* (saith our Apostle) *unto you that believe he is precious*; where by the opposition of *τοῖς πιστεύουσιν* them that believe, unto *ἀπειθεῖς* the disobedient in the immediate following clause, it is evident that by the Believers unto whom Christ is precious, the Apostle did mean obedient Christians, such Believers as do obey the Gospel of Christ; obey it in cordially assenting to the truth of the things

things revealed in it; obey it in hopefully expecting the fulfilling of the things promised by it; and obey it in sincerity, performing the things commanded in and by it. This is the first.

The Second is, What Christ is unto those that believe on him; and that (saith our Apostle) is τιμιον according to the Original Text; *Precious*, according to our Translation of it.

This word τιμιον hath two significations, which are Rivals in contest for place in this Text. Those significations are, *Honour* and *Price*. First it signifies *Honour*, as in *Joh. 4. 44.* where our Saviour testifies, that a Prophet τιμιον ἐκ ἑχθρας hath no honour in his own Country; so *Rom. 13. 7.* where the Apostle appoints, that Christians should render to all their dues, and particularly τῷ τῷ τιμιῷ τῷ τιμιῷ honour to whom honour is due. Secondly it signifies *Price*; as in *Mat. 27. 6.* where the money for which Judas sold his Master is called τιμιον αἱματος the price of blood. So *1 Cor. 6. 20.* ὑπογράψατε τιμῆς, Ye are bought with a price. Now because that which gives a price, is in its degree and kind precious, therefore by an Enallage of the Substantive for the Adjective, it may also signify precious. To be sure all the words in the New Testament, which are so rendered, (viz. τιμιος, τιμιότερος, τιμιότατος, ὑτιμος, ἰούτιμος, βαρύτιμος) are derived from it in this signification.

Now according to this variety of acceptation of the word, is the Text expounded by several men after a several manner: St. Hierome, Beza and Amesius, take the word in the first sense, and so render it, as if the Text were to be read, unto you therefore which believe he is an honour. And this very reading is so far favoured by our Church, as to be

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admitted into the Margent of our *Bibles*. Again *Piscator*, *Tyndal*, the *Geneva Interpreters*, and our own *Bibles*, both of the Old and New Translation, taking the word in the latter sense, render it *precious*; and our late learned *Paraphrast*, in the abstract, the *preciousness*, I suppose in conformity to the Context, where Christ is once and again, (namely in verse the fourth and sixth) beside this third place, styled *precious*.

According to whether acceptation we take the word, the sense of the Text is unquestionably sound and Orthodoxal. We will therefore not reject either, but consider and handle the Text according to both, beginning with that, which renders it *Honour*. And the Point delivered in the Text according to this Interpretation of it, is this, *That Christ is an Honour unto those that believe on him*.

Whereas those feigned Deities which the Heathen Idolaters worship for Gods, whether they be creatures of Gods making, or of their own making, are a shame and a reproach to the worshipers of them, as being but so many either nothings, *i. e.* none of the things that they are believed to be, and worshipped for, or *stinking things*, dunghil-gods, which it were a shame for any rational man to do any religious reverence, and perform any sacred worship to: Yet Christ Jesus, the God whom we serve, even that crucified Christ, who to the Jews is a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, is so far from being any reproach or shame, that he is an Honour and a Credit to the Believers on him, to the Worshipers of him. Such he is as in Himself; Such he is in his Relations unto them; and such also he is in that esteem which they have of Him.

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And First, Jesus Christ is an *Honour* unto them that believe on him, if considered as such as he is in Himself. And what is that? Why, *the only begotten Son of God*, Joh. 3. 16. *One with his Father*, Joh. 10. 30. *The Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. *Whom God hath exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour*, Act. 5. 31. *And hath made him Lord and Christ*, Act. 2. 36. *The King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, Rev. 19. 16. *The Judge of the World*, Act. 10. 42. *The Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. *The mighty God*, Isa. 9. 6. *The Head of all Principality and Power*, Colos. 2. 10. *Whom all things were created by and for, and by whom all things do consist*, Col. 1. 16, 17. Now Jesus Christ being such an one in Himself, what an *Honour* can it but be unto those that believe on him, that they do believe and trust in, worship and serve such an one as he?

Secondly, He is an *Honour* unto them that believe on him, if considered in his Relations unto them. What are they? We may reckon many, and all honourable. He is their *Brother*, Heb. 2. 1. their *Husband*, 2 Cor. 11. 2. their *Advocate*, 1 Joh. 2. 1. their *Captain*, Heb. 2. 10. their *Prophet*, Act. 3. 22. their *Priest*, Heb. 8. 1. their *King*, Rev. 15. 3. their *Shepherd*, Heb. 13. 20. their *Bishop*, 1 Pet. 2. 25. their *Foundation*, 1 Cor. 3. 10. their *Head*, Eph. 5. 23. Now what an *Honour* is there flowing from every of these Relations to every true Believer in Christ? O what an honour is it to a believing soul, to have the onely begotten Son of God, the Heir of all thing, the first born of every creature to be its Brother? to have the Lord of life and glory to be its Husband? To have the Son of Gods love who is in the bosome of his Father? to be its Advocate with the Father?

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to have the mighty God to be the Captain of its Salvation? to have the eternal wisdom of the Father to be its Prophet? the Holy One of God to be its Priest? the Head of all Principality and Power to be its King? to be a Sheep in that Flock, whereunto Christ is the Shepherd? to be a Communicant in that Church over which Christ is the Bishop? to be a Stone in that Building, whose Foundation is Christ? to be a Member of that Body whereof Christ is the Head? *Like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aarons beard, that went down to the Skirts of his garments;* so the Honour of Jesus Christ descends upon, and is derived unto every member of his body, even the lowest as well as the highest member of it; the meanest as well as the greatest Christian in it. *Such honour have all his Saints,* from the Relations which he stands in unto them. Such an honour he is unto them from those Relations.

Thirdly, As in Himself, and in his Relations unto his Saints; so in that esteem which they have of him he is an Honour to them. However he be disesteemed, despised and rejected of other men, (*to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, to Heretics and Atheists a scoffe and scorn*) yet to the true Believers on him, he is *truly* an honour in that account which they make, and in that esteem which they have of him. Hence proceeded their naming of his name upon themselves, calling themselves *Christians*; and as it were glorying in that Appellation, as did *Sanctius the Confessor*, from whom no tortures could extort any other answer, to whatever question was put to him, but this, *I am a Christian*. Hence their professing with a kind of delight to be related as *Servants* unto him, and
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intimating that relation by a frequent respectful calling him their Lord and Master. *Christ Jesus my Lord*, so St. Paul, *Phil. 3. 8.* Scarce would the devout Divine Mr. Harbert, even in his ordinary speech, mention the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, but he would adde unto it, *My Master*. How sweetly doth my Master sound! My Master! As *Ambergreece* leaves a rich scent unto the Taster, so do these words a sweet content: An Oriental fragrance, *My Master*! So he begins one of his Divine Poems, and goes on too in the same strain. Hence again their free and bold confessing him, even before Kings, in times of hottest and sharpest persecutions for his name; glorying in it, and counting it an honour, and an happiness to them to suffer shame and reproach, yea torments, and death it self for his Name. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, saith St. Peter, *1 Pet. 4. 41.* who together with the rest of the Apostles being beaten by the Council of Jerusalem for speaking in his name, went away rejoicing that they were counted worthy; or, as the word *κατηξιώ θήσαν* may signify, had the honour done them to suffer shame, *ἀτιμασθῆναι* to be dishonoured for his name, *Act. 5. 14.* In which expression St. Ignatius a follower of their faith and sufferings, doth also follow them; *ἡξιώθην εἰς τὸ διὰ τιμὴν φορεῖσαι ταῦτάς τας αλύσει*, so saith he of the chains, wherewith he was bound for the name and faith of Christ, I have been vouchsafed, counted worthy, or had the honour done me, to bear these bonds for the honour of God. Hence their triumphing in that great scandal both to Jews and Pagans, the only seeming thing of shame that could be objected to them, the Cross of Christ. I determined not to know any

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thing among you save Jesus Christ, καὶ τούτου ἕσπερον, and him crucified; so St. Paul wrote in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, c. 2. v. 2. And in like manner to the Galatians, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 6. 14. In so much that to confront those Infidels, whether Jews or Pagans, that objected it as a reproach unto them, that they worshipped a Crucified God, it was anciently an use amongst the Christians of the first and best Ages of the Church (and that without incurring thereby any guilt either of Popery or Superstition that I know of, however upon that groundless surmise disliked and disused by some of late) to apply the *sign of the Cross*, as a Badge of Honour, as well as Cognizance, to the Foreheads of Persons baptized, in token, as our Church expounds it, that thereafter they should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified; but fight manfully under his Banner against sin, the world and the Devil, and continue his faithful Soldiers and Servants unto their lives end. And thus you see how, both in Himself, and in those Relations wherein he stands unto Believers, and in that Esteem which they have of him, Christ Jesus is an Honour unto those that do believe on him.

Now this consideration of the Honour that Christ is unto those that believe on him, may be useful sundry ways.

And First, It may be a good inducement unto persons of ingenuity to embrace, or retain the Faith of Christ. Christianity, 'tis an honourable Religion. The Author of it is an Honour to those that profess it, and that far beyond what ever the founder of any Sect either amongst Jews or Greeks was to the Sectaries of it. It may be a shame to the Followers

lowers of *Mahomet*, to have no better than an Epileptical Impostor to be their Leader. It may be a shame to Idolatrous Pagans to have the Father of lies to be the Author of their Religions. But unto the Believers in Jesus Christ it cannot but be an Honour, that in their way they do follow him in the Truth, who is the way of Truth, to Life; yea who is the true God and eternal life, 1 Joh. 5. 20.

Secondly, It might be a good check to our too eager pursuit after worldly honour. Do we believe in Christ? 'Tis honour enough, even that for us. Christ is an honour to us; and what better? what greater honour can we have, or hope for, than what Christ is? Why do we then unwisely neglect that which is our chiefest honour, and childishly run after gaudy baubles; needlessly prosecute insignificant Titles; such as a man may carry on his back to Hell with him, and perhaps be helpt to be sunk thither by? O let us content our selves with that honour which Christ is unto us, and never engage our selves into a solicitous pursuit after any honour, but that which comes from God, and that which tends unto the honour of God; rejoicing more to have our names written in heaven, than to be assumed unto the highest honours upon earth; & pleasing our selves better in it to be the servants of Jesus, than the Sons of Nobles, to be the Members of Christ, than to be the Monarchs of the world.

Thirdly, It should be a good Argument to persuade those that believe in Christ, to labour to be an Honor unto Him. Do ye believe in Christ? Christ is an honour unto you, & gratitude requires that you should mutually be an honour unto him. They should honour him, that are honoured by him. Besides, 'tis wisdom to be all the honour ye can unto Christ.

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Christ. For those that honour him, them will he honour, and in proportion to that honour that they are unto him; the greater that the honour is that ye are unto Christ, the greater shall that honour be that ye shall receive from Christ; *For he will render to every man according to his deeds,* Rom. 2. 6.

Perhaps ye will here ask me, how ye shall do to be an Honour unto Christ? To this I answer plainly and shortly; Lead good lives, lives made up of piety and purity, like the life of Christ, and ye shall thereby be an honour unto Christ.

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Our evil lives are a great dishonour unto Christ, *In nobis Christus patitur opprobrium*, saith *Salvian*. By our means reproach falls upon Christ himself, through our evil deeds his name is blasphemed amongst the Infidels abroad, and the Atheists at home. *Ecce quales sunt qui Christum colunt!* See, say they, by way of scoff, what kind of persons your Christians are! 'Twere well that they would stop there, and that that were all. But they go on further to the dishonour of Christ and his Gospel; *Sancta a Christianis fierent, si Christus Sancta docuisset*. Christians, say they, would have practiced holiness if Christ had taught it. And again, *Astimari de cultoribus suis potest ille qui collitur*. *Quomodo enim bonus Magister est, cujus tam malos videmus esse discipulos*. Ye may judge of him that is worshipped, by them that are the worshippers of him. How can we think the Master good, whose Scholars we see to be so bad? O whose heart is not ready to run out at his eyes in tears of blood, to think that the evil lives of Christians should be such a dishonour unto Christ! It is too true, they are so, and we cannot deny it; (*Pudet hac*

hac opprobria nobis & dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli) and a great shame it is unto us, that so they are, and we must confess it.

On the contrary therefore, lead good lives, and ye shall be an honour unto Christ. As the goodness of the Scholar is the glory of the Master, so the holiness of a Christian is the honour of Christ. *For our light so to shine before men, that they may see our good works*, that's the way to bring them to glorify our Father which is in Heaven, Mat. 5. 16. The Subjection of Christians unto the Gospel of Christ, is matter of *Glorification* unto God, 2 Cor. 9. 13. How will reason argue from the Life, to the Law! from the Transcript, to the Original! If the actions of Christians be so good, how good is the Law that guides those actions! If the lives of Christians be so holy, what holiness was there in the life of Christ, which is the Exemplar of all that holiness that is in them! When the Disciples shine as stars on earth, what shall the glory of the Master be, but as that of the Sun in Heaven! That, that's the way to honour Christ above other Gods, for those that honour him, to be holy above other men. And O, what an encouragement must this needs be unto holiness and goodness, when the goodness of the creature shall be the glory of the Creator, and the holiness of a Christian the honour of Christ. As ever therefore ye desire not to be a reproach and shame, but a reputation and honour unto Christ, so be ye holy in your lives, and godly in your conversations. Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity, and him that saith he abideth in Christ, so walk even as Christ himself walked; denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living sober-

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berly, righteously and godly in this present world; and every day more and more perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

And thus far we have discoursed of the Text according to that acceptation of the word τιμή in it, in which it is by some rendred *Honour*. We will now, in reverence to our own Translators who render it *Precious*; and in reference to Authority which hath stamped that Translation for current amongst us; and also out of respect unto the context, wherein Christ is more then once termed *precious*; we will now (I say) proceed to discourse of the Text according to that acceptation of the word also. And the Point delivered in the Text according to that Interpretation of it, is this, *That Jesus Christ is very precious to a true believing-Christian. Unto you therefore which believe* (saith our Apostle here) *he is ἡ τιμή* even *preciousness* in the abstract, that is, *very precious*.

Now this we shall shew him to be in five respects. Things are precious unto men in respect, either first of their Rarity and Singularity; or secondly of their Worth and Excellencies; or thirdly, of their Pleasingness and Delightfulness; or fourthly, of their Usefulness and Profitableness; or fifthly, of their Needfulness and Necessariness. And upon all these considerations Christ is precious unto those that believe on him.

And First in respect of *Rarity and Singularity*. Men use to account those things precious, which are rare and singular; besides which there are few, or none other of the same kind in being; as the *Phoenix* or other rare birds or beasts, fruits or trees; & upon this account is Jesus Christ precious to a believing soul. There is no such Saviour as he, no Saviour but he.

he. Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, A&C. 4. 12. Whence he is in Scripture styled by way of Emphasis, *The Saviour*, Joh. 4. 42. Phil. 3. 20. Now the believing soul being fully perswaded of this, doth upon this account highly esteem of Jesus Christ; He is very dear and precious unto it.

Secondly, In respect of *Worth and Excellency*. Men use to account those things precious, which are of great worth and excellency in any kind; as Gold and Pearls, and precious Stones. And upon this account is Jesus Christ even *ἡ τιμή* the preciousness to a believing soul; as being of worth above its comprehension, excellent beyond its imagination. As there is no considerable light in the Stars, but what is imparted unto them from the Sun; so there is nothing of worth or excellency in any respect in any part of the Creation, but what is a communicated ray of the worth and excellency that is in Christ, *by whom all things were created and do consist*, Colos. 1. 16, 17. What worth, what excellency then must there needs be in Christ, from whom all worth and excellency is communicated! The particulars of his Excellencies are innumerable, the nature of them unutterable, the value of them inconceivable; they are an Ocean which knows neither bank nor bottom, every way infinite and incomprehensible. And this the Believing soul being fully perswaded of, sets a high price upon him; counts him *the chiefest of ten thousand*, as the Spouse in the Canticles did her Beloved; yea *worth ten thousand of us*, as Davids servants did their Lord.

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Lord. Yea were there ten thousand times ten thousand persons of more worth and excellency than any that ever yet lived upon the face of the earth; yet in the esteem of the Believing soul, they be all of no worth if compared with Christ, which would say to him in *Dauids* words, *Psal. 73. 25: Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire in comparison of thee.* In them could be but the finite worth and excellency of the Creature, in Him is the infinite worth and excellency of the Creator. Now betwixt finite and infinite there is no proportion, and so there can be no comparison. Thus precious is Christ Jesus unto the Believing Christian in respect of worth and excellency.

Thirdly, In respect of *Pleasingsness* and *Delightfulness*. Men use to account those things precious wherein they find much pleasure, and take great delight; as beautiful flowers, rich perfumes, charming ayres, &c. And upon this account is Christ Jesus very precious to a Believing soul. The Spouse in the Canticles first compares him to a *Tree*, and then expresseth what delight she took both in his *shadow*, and in his *fruit*. *I sate down (saith she) under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my tast,* Cant. 3. 3. O the rare pleasures, the ravishing sweets of that Communion which true Believers have with Christ! Those that truly believe in Christ are spiritually united unto Christ, and have the spirit of Christ in-dwelling in them. Now what inward joyes are, at some times especially, communicated unto their souls, what secreet sweets are impressed upon their spirits by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in them, cannot so well be told as felt. 'Tis indeed,

deed *χαρὰ ἀνεκλάλητος*, as our Apostle tell us in the first chap. of this Ep. ver. 8. joy unspeakable, such as they that feel it within, yet are not able to speak it out. A believing soul enjoying inward actual communion with Christ, is sometimes as it were emparadised on this side heaven, not being with S. Paul, wrapt into the third heaven, but having with Christ on the Mount, the third heaven brought down unto him, yea, and into him too, so that he hath a heaven in the very heart of him.

O speak it when I am gone (said one) and preach it at my Funeral: God dealeth familiarly with man, I land. feel his mercy, I see his Majesty, whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God he knoweth, but I see things that are unutterable. I am (saith another) by the wonderful mercies of Christ as full of

Mr. Hol-

Mr. Bolton.

comfort as my heart can hold, and feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be. O (crys out a third) the joyes, the joyes, the joyes that I feel in my soul! they be wonderful, they be wonderful, they be wonderful, &c. With some such prelibations of blisse, foretasts of happinesse, earnestness of their promised inheritance, doth Christ sometimes comfort the hearts, delight the souls, and endear to him the affections of those that truly believe on him; and thence also he is very precious unto them.

Mr. Kett. Bretterghs

Fourthly, in respect of *Usefulness and Profitableness*. Men do usually set a great price upon things that are greatly Useful and Profitable to them; as rich Land, fat Pastures, vendible Merchandize, helpful Engines and Instruments, &c. And upon this account also is Jesus Christ very precious to a believing soul. He is of mighty use, hugely advantagious to it. He is a Father to it for Care, a Brother for Love, a Head for Direction,

and

and a Husband for a Protection. He is the Believers Prophet to teach and instruct him; his Priest to sacrifice for and bless him; and his King to govern and reward him. Dost thou believe in Christ? then let the Devil accuse thee, Christ will be thy Advocate to justify thee: let God be angry with thee, Christ will be thy Mediator to reconcile him to thee; let the Enemies of thy salvation oppose and fight against thee, Christ will be the Captain of thy salvation to fight for thee and defend thee. Art thou a Believer in Christ? then in sickness Christ will be thy Physician to heal thee; in sorrow Christ will be thy Friend to comfort thee; in need Christ will be thy Assistant to help thee, in distress Christ will be thy Counsellor to advise thee, and in danger Christ will be thy Saviour to deliver thee. To the hungry, he is bread, to the thirsty, he is drink; to the naked, he is cloathing; to the destitute he is a covering; to the persecuted, he is a sanctuary; to the weak, he is strength; to the blind, he is light; and unto the dead, he is life. He is wisdom to the ignorant, righteousness to the guilty, sanctification to the polluted, redemption to the imprisoned, salvation to the condemned. In a word, to the believing soul Christ is every thing that it can want, or can desire. And the believing soul being both perswaded by the Gospel, and finding by experience that he is all this unto it, upon this account also, as I know not how it should do any other, holds him exceeding dear and precious to it self.

Fifthly, in respect of *Necessaries* in order to the Believers happiness. Men do usually make great account of, and esteem very precious such things as they must needs have, and can no wayes be, or be

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S. Chrys.
Serm. 24.
on Rom.
13. 13.

be well without; as meat in hunger, clothes in cold, Physick in sickness, &c. And even upon this account is Christ Jesus exceeding precious unto those that believe on him. They know that there is no salvation to be had without him; that there is no other Saviour besides him, there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but his only. They know that without him there would be none to give them any instruction, or to make for them any satisfaction, or to afford them any protection; that without him they could neither be justified from guilt, nor sanctified from corruption, nor redeemed from damnation; that without him they could neither do any thing but sin, nor expect any thing but punishment, nor be any thing but the miserable objects of Gods wrath, and the Devils malice, the power of Death, and the plagues of Hell; and therefore upon this absolute necessity that they apprehend themselves to have of him, he is exceedingly dear and precious unto them.

And thus I have shewn you, both that Christ is very precious unto them that believe on him, and also upon what account it is, that he is so precious to them. The point will be useful two wayes; first by way of Examination, and then by way of Exhortation; unto both which I now proceed.

And First for *Examination*. You see Brethren that Christ is precious unto them that do truly believe on him; examine your selves a while now, whether he be so to you, or no. By such examination you may come to understand something of your own condition, and discern whether you be in the faith or no; whether you believe, or do not believe in Christ; or at leastwise what kind of Be-

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lievers in Christ you are : Well then the question is, Is Christ Jesus precious to you ? That which is precious to a man, First he will have his mind much and often upon; Secondly, he will highly prize it; Thirdly, he will greatly desire it; Fourthly, he will diligently seek it; Fifthly, he will dearly purchase it; Sixthly he will carefully keep it. And so it is with those to whom Christ Jesus is precious. By these notes Believers do use to evidence the preciousness of Christ to them; by these notes therefore do you examine your selves about Christs preciousness unto you, & by that examination try the truth, and see the strength of your faith in Christ. And first, they to whom Christ is precious, will have their hearts and minds much and oft upon him. A mans heart will be much upon his treasure, and so will the Believers heart be much upon Christ; he thinks he can never have his fill of thinking of him; and wishes to spend eternity in that communion with him. But because the Bow cannot always be at full bent, and the affairs of this temporal life do necessitate frequent interruptions of that spiritual commerce, therefore he is forced to give entertainment to other cogitations; but yet as if they were but only occasional diversions, and not the business of his life, he returns eftsoons after every interruption to his main concerning meditation. An evidence whereof we may have in the Primitive Christians, who did seporate not only a week of extraordinary days in every year, but one Ordinary day in evry week, ye and I had almost said a week of hours in every day to acts and exercises of holy communion with him, praising him with *David seven times a day*, and *rising with him at Midnight* also to praise him; and all this, besides what came in by

by the by, in occasional ejaculations and devotions, in respect of which they might be said to *pray continually*, and even *without ceasing*. Now Christians, examine your hearts; how stand they towards Christ? is their inclination, like that of the needle towards the pole, continually moving towards him? Do your souls like *Davids*, (Psal. 63.8.) *hang upon him*, and *follow hard after him*? Upon every interruption do your souls, like the Spouses soul in the *Canticles*, c. 6. v. 12. *make you like the Charrets of Aminadib*, hot and swift in the retirement of him? Plainly and shortly, Is it a sweet thing to you to meditate upon him? And do you exercise your selves much in that converse with him? Are you often thinking of him? And do you delight in such thinking? Then 'tis a sign you have some value for him, that he is precious unto you. But if the world, or any thing in it, take up the whole, or the remain of your hearts, so that your minds are little or nothing upon Christ, and you are seldome or never thinking of him, it is a sign Christ is not very precious to you. Small is the value we have for that, which we are seldome or never thinking of.

Secondly, they to whom Christ is precious, as they will be much and often thinking of him, so they will set a high price and value upon him, they will very highly prize him. His worth with them is *above Rubies*, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to him, Prov. 8. 11. Like St. Paul, they will count all things but loss and dung in comparison with him, Phil. 3. 8. Now Brethren, is it so with you? Have you such high thoughts of Christ? Do you set so great a price upon him? Do you apprehend a Divine nature and excellency, an infi-

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finite worth and value in him? Is there nothing that your heart can prefer before him? It is then a sign he is precious to you. But if your thoughts touching his nature and excellency be mean and low, so that like the *Arian Hereticks* of old, and the *Socinian Hereticks* of late, you esteem him but *Ψιλον ἄνθρωπον*, a meer man; if his worth and value in your apprehension be scanty and little, such as it was in his, who sold him for thirty pence; (and it is sad to think how many there be at this day that matter not the selling of him at a much lower rate;) if there be any thing that you prize above him, or prefer before him, then it is a sign that in your eyes he is *despised*, and you esteem him not, that you make no great account of him, that he is not precious to you. Those things are not precious to us, which we have but little value for.

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n. Thirdly, They to whom Christ is precious, have a very great desire after him. They hunger after him, they pant and breath after him, even as the Hart pants and brays after the Water-brooks; their Souls, like Davids, are athirst for God, (Psal. 42. 1, 2.) for the living God; they count all things, like St. Paul, but loss and dung, that they may win Christ. Phil. 3. 8. O my Dove, that art in the clefts of the Rocks, in the secret places of the Stairs, let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy Voice, for sweet is thy Voice, and thy Countenance is comely: So breaths the Spouse in the Canticles after Christ her beloved, Cant. 2. 14. Christ is the desire of the souls of them that truly believe in him, and their hearts do even run after him with the swiftest feet of the strongest affections. Is it so with you Brethren? Examine your hearts upon this Point. Have you so fervent a love for your Lord? Have you so passionate affections for Jesus? Have you so strong

strong desires after Christ? Is the desire of all Nations the delight of your souls? Answerable unto his preciousness to you will be your affections for, your love to, your desires after him. But if your affection for him be small, your love cold, your desire weak, it is a sign he is not precious to you. That is not very precious to a man, which he hath no great love for, nor mind to, nor desire after.

Fourthly, they to whom Christ is precious, will be very industrious in their Inquest after him; they will seek him diligently even as silver, and search for him as for hidden treasures, Prov. 2. 4. or as a Merchant seeks for goodly Pearls, Mat. 13. 45. they will seek him, like the Spouse in the Canticles, by night, upon their beds, and by day in the streets, and in the broad wayes, Cant. 3. 1, 2. in private duties, in publick Ordinances, any where, every where, wherever they may hope to find him, neglecting no means, refusing no pains, missing no opportunities of coming to him. Is it so with you Brethren? Are you diligent in your search after Christ? Can you find in your hearts to be at paines to find him? Do you think no labours, no watchings, no fastings, no prayers, no teares, no attendance in duties, and on Ordinances too great so you may win Christ? It is then a sign Christ is precious to you. But if you make little or no inquiring after him, if you be listless and lazie in the seeking of him; if you think much and grudge to be at paines to find him, it is a sign you set small value upon him, that you have no precious esteem for him. It is not precious to a man that is not worth his seeking after.

Fifthly, they to whom Christ is precious, will be willing to purchase him at any rate, though never so dear, so they may but have him. They will part

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even with all for him. Like the Merchant in the Gospel that sought for goodly pearls, when they have found *this one Pearl of great price*, they will sell all they have, that they may buy him. They will forgoe their Liberties for Christ; they will forgoe their estates for Christ; they will forgoe their Honours for Christ; they will forgoe their Friends for Christ; they will forgoe their sins for Christ; they will forgoe their righteousness for Christ, and they will forgoe even their lives for Christ. *I have goods, a Wife and Children, (said a French-Confessor once) and yet I have lost those affections which I formerly bore to them, neither are they dear to me, so I may gain Christ. I love my wife and children in the Lord, said an English Martyr, and if I had ten thousand pound in gold, I had rather forgoe it all, than them; but I have them as if I had them not, and I will not for their sakes forsake Christ. What things were gain to me, saith St. Paul, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may winne Christ, Phil. 3. 7, 8. It were easie to be very large, even so as to tire you with such like instances as these, of Persons who have been willing at any rate to purchase Christ, weighing neither things visible nor things invisible, as St. Ignatius said by himself, *ἵνα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκτιμήσω*, for the gaining of Christ. But how is it now with you Brethren? Are you so fond of this great purchase? Are you willing to part with any thing, yea even with all thing for Christ? Have you nothing but what you can readily forgoe for him, however otherwise dear and delightful it be to you? Then it is a sign that in your esteem of him Christ is precious. But if there be*

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be any enjoyment, whether of Liberty or Estate, Honour or Friend, Sin or Duty, yea if it be even Life it self, which you are not contented to part withall for Christ, I shall leave it unto your selves to consider whether Christ be precious unto you or no. It is not precious which one would not part with a Vanity for; And what is the best of earthly comforts and enjoyments more? *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, Eccl. 1.2*

Sixthly, They to whom Christ is precious, having got him, are careful to keep him. When the Spouse in the *Canticles* had found him whom her soul loved, O how careful was she to keep him! *I held him, saith she, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my Mothers house, and into the Chambers of her that conceived me, Cant. 3. 4.* Christ when once gained, is too precious, the believing-soul thinks, for her to be ever willing to part with again; and therefore she useth no less care to keep him, than she took pains to get him. O how she clings to him, and clasps about him with the powerfulllest arms of purest Love! No man is more careful to preserve a Jewel, than a believing-soul is to keep its Jesus. She Cabinets up this Pearl of inestimable price, in the innermost Closet of her heart. And as if she could never think him safe enough, she is continually visiting of him there. Like the man in the Comedy, that had found and hid a pot of Gold, her eye or mind is seldom off from him. Nor will she upon any terms do any thing that may vex him thence; as well knowing, that if once upon any unworthy usage he withdraw himself, it is no easie matter to recover him again. Here therefore she bestoweth all her care, here she exerciseth all her skill how she may.

Plaut.
Aulust.

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her Beloved, how she may everlastingly enjoy her Dearest one. And how is it now with you Brethren? are you so careful to keep your Christ? are you so fearful to lose your Jesus? are you so cautious not to do any thing whereby he may be provoked to withdraw himself from you? If so, then it is a sign he is precious to you. But if you have small or no regard to the holding of so precious a possession as Christ is; if you slight such a Friend when he is come to you; if you abuse him, or by any unworthy carriage towards him, do provoke him to depart from you, then it is a sign you do not much esteem him, that you set no very great value upon him. Not very precious are those things to us, which when we have them, we care not whether we lose or keep them.

I may yet over and above all these Notes, add in the seventh place, That they to whom Christ is precious, do preciouslly esteem of any thing that is Christs; any thing that bears upon it the stamp and signature of Christ; any thing that hath relation unto Christ, as the Members of Christ, the Ministers of Christ, the Word of Christ, the Name of Christ, the Day of Christ, and the House of Christ. They to whom Christ is precious, will have a precious esteem for all these. His Members they refresh as his own bowels; his Ministers they receive as his own self; his Word they hear as his own voice; his Name (that Name which is above every Name, his Name Jesus) they do account with St.

m.4. in *Chrysostome* to contain a thousand treasures of good things; and will not hear it named, especially in Divine Service, without some token of an especial ~~care~~ His Day with St. Ignatius and Gregory they account *Βασιλῖδα* and *Σάτωρ*

ἡ βασίλισσα τῶν ἡμερῶν, the Queen and highest of all Dayes, and call his Sabbath a delight. And for his House, with the Patriarch Jacob, they account it no other but the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven. Now Brethren, how is it with you as to these things? Have you such dear affections for any thing that is Christ? Have you so precious an esteem for any of the Relatives of Christ? If so, 'tis well; it is a sign of a good esteem that you have of Christ himself, and that he is precious unto you. But if not (and there be too many that with their mouths do shew much love to Christ, who in their hearts have love little enough for the Members of Christ, lesse for the Word of Christ, and least of all for the Ministers of Christ; too many there be that pretend to be great honourers of Christ, that shew no more respect to the Name of Christ, than to any other Name; not much more respect to the Day of Christ, than to any other day; and as little (if not less) respect to the House of Christ, as to any other house) I say, if that be not precious to you, which is Christ, it is to be feared, that you do but pretend, all the while that you say, That Christ is precious unto you.

And now Brethren, if upon examination of your selves by these Notes, you find that Christ is precious unto you, ye may comfort your selves with a confidence of your being in the Faith of Christ. For unto those that believe in him, he is precious. But on the other side, if upon this examination you cannot find Christ precious to you, ye may do well to consider whether ye be in the faith or no. If he be precious unto those that believe on him, then how can those be thought to believe on him, to whom he is not precious?

And

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And therefore (to proceed in the second place, from *Examination* unto *Exhortation*) to the end you may be able to assure your hearts of the truth of your faith, that ye do in truth believe in Jesus, labour, O labour that Christ may be precious unto you. He is infinitely precious in himself; O never leave till he be answerably precious unto you. These two are very distant things, for Christ to be precious in himself, and to be precious unto us. We cannot make him more precious then he already is in himself. To that which is infinite can nothing be added to make it more infinite; and 'tis infinite the preciousness that is in Christ. But we may make him much more precious unto our selves, then as yet he hath been to us. The Jewel in the Table was perfectly possessed of all its genuine native worth, at the same time when the dunghil-Cock prefer'd a barlie-corn before it. The Lord Jesus Christ was

Isa. 53. 2. the brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express image
1 Pet. 2. 4. of his person, (Heb. 1. 3.) even then when in the
Isa. 53. 3. sight of men he had no form, nor comeliness, nor beauty
that they should desire him. He was chosen of God and
precious, even then when he was despised and rejected
of men. He was the Lord of glory, even then when
the Jews his own people denied and crucified him.
 That therefore being precious in himself, he may be precious unto you; That's the thing I exhort you to labour for. O labour to endear Christ to your souls.

Now if any would know how to do this, Two Directions I shall give him in this case. First let him study the *worth* that there is in Christ; Secondly let him consider the *need* that he hath of Christ. If there be any man to whom Christ is not precious, surely it is upon one, or both of these points; either first because he is not sufficiently informed of the

the due worth of Christ, or else secondly, because he is not truly sensible of the great need that he hath of Christ. That therefore he may be precious unto you, be much and oft upon these Meditations.

First, *Study the worth of Christ*; consider the various excellencies, that with most illustrious beams do shine forth in him, and that whether you look upon him as *God*, or as *Man*, or as *Mediator* betwixt God and Man.

Look upon him, First as *man*, and how can ye but admire the exemplary holinesse of his life! *He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* How can ye but admire the insuperable patience of his Death! *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb is dumb before the shearer, so opened he not his mouth.* Lastly, how can ye but admire the incomparable charity which he shewed both in his life and death! In his life *he went about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases and sickness of the people.* In his death he prayed to his Father for pardon for his very Crucifiers.

Secondly, Look upon him as *Mediator*, and acting in all his several offices. And how can ye but admire the excellencies of his Teachings as a *Prophet*! *Gracious words proceeded out of his mouth. Never man spake as he spake.* How can ye but admire the pre-
valency of his Sacrifice and Intercession as a *Priest*! Thereby he made satisfaction unto God for our sins; and makes our Persons acceptable unto God. And how can ye but admire the magnificency of his Administration of the Regal Government as a *King*! Thereby he rescues us from the power, malice, and injuries of all our enemies, whether they be Sin or Satan, Death or Grave, World or Hell; and both at present translates us into a Kingdom of Grace, and
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will hereafter estate us in a Kingdom of Glory.

Lastly, If you are able, look upon him as God. And how can ye but admire the incomparable greatness of his Power! He is Omnipotent; *nothing too hard for him, he can do all things.* How can ye but admire the incomprehensible deepnesse of his Wisdom! He is Omniscient, *his understanding it is infinite; he knows all things.* And how can ye but admire the unmeasurable largeness of his goodness! He is Omnibenificent, good to all, and his mercy is over all his works. Yea not an Attribute of his, but may be a Subject for Angels to contemplate upon; and even they too will come short of comprehending the full of it, and lose themselves at last into high admirings and holy adorings of him for it.

O meditate my Brethren, much and oft upon these things. And when you find that the Lord whom you serve, the Jesus whom you believe in, the Christ in whom ye put your trust, is so glorious a God, so gracious a Man, so efficacious a Mediatour betwixt God and Man, you will find your hearts carried strongly forth in high and lofty affections toward him, so that his person will be dear, his name sweet, and the very thought of him precious to your souls.

Secondly, Consider the Need you have of Christ; which will appear by considering the utter undone-ness of your condition without Christ. The want of this consideration is one cause why it is that to many men Christ is no more precious than he is. They set no price upon him, because they discern not their need of him. O call your selves to a strict account, and commune with your own hearts diligently about this; even what need you have of Christ. And that as we noted, you will quickly discern

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scern, when once ye come to understand the miserableness of your estate without Christ.

And alas! What is man without Christ? An enemy to God, a servant to sin, a slave to Satan, a child of wrath, a Captive to Death, a brand of hell. Now surely to be in this estate is a fearful thing. And to him that rightly understands the fearfulness of this estate, nothing can be imagined more needful, than that by which he may be delivered out of, and freed from this estate. Why, there is no deliverer of any from this estate but Christ; there is no deliverance for any from it, but by Christ. O how precious then must Christ needs be to a poor creature that is terrified with the fearful apprehensions of his being in so woful a condition. Never was sight more welcome to man that was blind, never feet more acceptable to him that was lame, never health more desirable by him that was sick, never liberty more dear to him that was imprisoned, never pardon more precious to him that was condemned, than Christ would be to such a soul.

Let me put a few Queries into your mouths to ask your selves about this businesse, when you are at your best leisures. Have you given a perfect unfinning Obedience to the whole Law of God in every point of it? If so, then you may challenge life from God as due debt, upon the score of his promise, *This do and live.* But if not (as sure you have not, for there is none that liveth, and sinneth not) then, are you able to bear that curse of the Law which is due to him that continueth not in every thing that is written in the Book of the Law to do it? Are you able to dwell to all eternity with devouring fire? If not that (for who is able to dwell with everlasting burning?) then are you able to free your selves from it,
either

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either first by powerful *resistance*, not suffering the sentence to be put in execution? or secondly by *persuasive eloquence*, softning the Judge to a revoking of the sentence of your condemnation? Or thirdly, by prevalent *intercession* of interposing friends, men or Angels, extorting from him a pardon for your transgression? Or fourthly, by *giving* unto Justice in some way of Commutation a full and valuable *satisfaction*? If your deliverance from eternal damnation be neither to be wrought any one of these wayes, nor be obtained any other way beside these, but only through the *Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, and that invaluable merit of his most precious blood, there needs no more, sure, to tell you what need ye have of Christ. How can a soul fully convinced of this, but cry out for Christ, as Rachel did for Children, *Give me Christ, O give me Christ or else I die*. If ever there were any of you brought into that condition, experimentally to understand the miserableness of the case of a man without Christ, that is of a sinner without a Saviour, I know your experience will confirm my sayings.

Let me yet add, Which of you is able to overcome a temptation without strength from Christ? Which of you sufficient himself to perform a good action (yea even think a good thought) without grace from Christ? O what is the best of us but a withered branch if separate from communion with Christ? The all that we can do without him, is just nothing at all. In a word, if all the hope of your acceptance with God, of your Resurrection unto life, and of your Reception into Glory be founded upon Christ, and Christ alone, then understand your need of Christ; and accordingly as you need him, so esteem of him. If such extream *need* of Christ

as in you, added unto such exceeding Worth as in Christ, be not enough to render him precious to you, who is able to imagine what should be enough? The Lord help you to such a frame of spirit, as that Christ Jesus may be precious to you.

And yet I might further add, First, That to have a precious esteem of Christ, is the way to be precious-ly esteemed of by Christ. If Christ be in your esteem a pearl of great price, you shall be in Christs esteem jewels of no little price. Not the least drop of respect you shed on him, but shall be showed back manifold upon your selves. And this is comfortable. There's a sweet blessing pronounced on all those that are sincere lovers of Christ, by St. Paul in the close of his Epistle to the Ephesians, c. 6. v. 24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Amen.* Grace, what's that here? Why, the love, the favour, the mercy, the kindness of God, expressing it self in blessings from God. This grace the Apostle prays that it may, and according to his prayer, most assuredly it will be with the sincere lovers of Jesus Christ, unto whom he is precious.

Secondly, I might add, That not to have Christ precious unto you, is the next to your making light of Christ. If he that is not a lover of his brother be in Gods account a murderer of his brother, O take heed that your not having a high esteem of the Son of God, be not in the account of God a treading of his Son under foot. And as the other was comfortable, so this is terrible. There is a bitter curse denounced against all those that are not lovers of Christ by St. Paul also in the close of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, c. 6. v. 23. *If any man*

